

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 13, 2005. Claims 34 and 40 - 43 are pending in the application, all of which are independent. Claim 34 has been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention, in terms that distinguish over the art. Claims 36 - 39 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and Claims 40 - 43 have been added to assure Applicant of a full measure of protection of the scope to which he deems himself entitled. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 34 and 36 - 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from U.S. Patents 4,908,861 (Brachtl et al.) and 4,656,474 (Mollier et al.), taken together.

The general nature of the present invention, and the primary reference, have been discussed adequately in previous papers, and it is not deemed necessary to repeat that discussion.

Independent Claim 34 is directed to a digital camera that comprises recording means for recording digital image data, and input means for inputting a secret key from an external device, the external device being portable and interfacing with the digital camera. Generating means generate a digital signature using the recorded digital image data and the input secret key, and outputting means output the generated digital signature to the external device.

Claims 40 - 42 are, respectively, corresponding method, program-code and memory-medium claims.

Independent Claim 43 is directed to a digital camera that comprises recording means for recording digital image data, and compressor means for compressing

the data. Input means input a secret key from an external device, the external device being portable and interfacing with the digital camera, and generating means generating a digital signature using the recorded digital image data and the input secret key. First outputting means serve to output the digital signature to the external device, and second output means output the input data.

Thus, among other important features of each of the claims are, generating a digital signature based on digital image data recorded in a digital camera and secret information input from an external device and outputting the generated digital signature to the external device.

Brachtl relates to generating a digital signature using input data and a secret key. However, Applicant submits that nothing has been found in *Brachtl* that would teach or suggest specifying an apparatus into which a secret key is input and an apparatus to which a generated digital signature is output, and neither discloses nor suggests that these apparatuses are the same one. For at least that reason, the claims are each deemed to be clearly allowable over *Brachtl* taken alone.

Mollier relates to a system in which a secret key is input from a card (1a in the one drawing figure) that is coupled to a transmitting device 1. The device 3 that receives the message is coupled to a control card 3b, which stores the secret key and a program for recomputing the signature of a received message. It should be noted, however, that the *Mollier* digital signature is generated on the basis of the secret key input to the device 3, and nothing has been found, or pointed out, in that patent that would teach or suggest that an apparatus into which a secret key is input and an apparatus to which a generated digital signature is output are the same apparatus, as recited in the present claims. Even if *Mollier* is combined with *Brachtl* in the manner proposed in the Office

Action, therefore, and even assuming such combination would be a proper one, the result would not meet the terms of Applicant's claims, and those claims are deemed clearly allowable over *Bracht* and *Mollier*.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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